

goals of our country. Catholic schools, parents, and teachers across the nation play a critical role in achieving this end, and I again congratulate them for their ongoing contributions to education.

PASSIONATE COMPASSION

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 30, 2004

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I am increasingly distressed by the trend of public policy at the federal level. For years people blamed federal deficits and increased federal spending on excesses in programs that seek to alleviate poverty and meet the needs of lower income people. Today, from the standpoint of those of us who care about social justice, we have the worst of both worlds—a steeply increasing deficit at the budget level while the percentage of national resources devoted to meeting the economic needs of the poorest of our citizens decreases.

I try to keep this issue constantly in focus, and I am greatly aided in doing so by one of the most dedicated fighters for social justice I have even met—Mark A. Sullivan, Jr., the Executive Director of Citizens for Citizens, an excellent community action program based in Fall River, Massachusetts, with responsibilities in much of the southeastern part of our state.

Mark Sullivan is a man of very considerable talent. His intelligence, commitment, and organizing skills could have led him to a number of lucrative careers. He has instead for the past thirty years stayed at his post in trying to fight poverty and economic deprivation.

Sadly, his job had been made much harder in recent years by the distorted budget priorities being followed by the current administration and Congressional majority. Too often people here vote for cuts as if they were dealing with abstractions without understanding the terrible human consequences of their efforts. No one I know does a better job of trying to make these impacts clear than Mark Sullivan, and in a recent excellent article in the Fall River Herald News, by Deborah Allard-Bernardi, Mr. Sullivan gives one of the expositions at which he excels about the negative effects of what we have been doing.

Because in my mind no issue is more important than reversing this trend of cutting back on the help we give to the neediest among us, I ask that this important discussion by Mark Sullivan in the Fall River Herald News be printed here.

[From the Herald News, Jan. 22, 2004]

CFC DECRIES LACK OF FUNDING
(By Deborah Allard-Bernardi)

FALL RIVER.—If society doesn't see the invisible man, it's not looking for him, according to Mark A. Sullivan Jr., executive director of Citizens for Citizens Inc.

Actually, it's not just the invisible man Sullivan is worried about, but an entire society of poor people including the elderly, single women and children as well as men. He says they . . . by the very entity that is charged with caring for them: the government.

"Low-income people are off the radar screen," said Sullivan at a press conference Wednesday. "People in this country are locked into being poor."

It's been cuts after cuts for CFC and other agencies that provide food, fuel assistance, housing, day care and other core services to the needy. CFC's most recent plight is a new unemployment formula that is threatening to close its Head Start program before its usual summer hiatus.

The increased unemployment charges that CFC must pay to stay in business as a non-profit organization rose on Jan. 1 from \$125,000 a year to \$255,000 a year. Sullivan said unemployment insurance rose from 4.9 percent for the first \$10,800 each employee makes to 8.2 percent for the first \$14,000.

Coupled with a \$63,000 deficit to the Head Start program, which Sullivan said CFC discovered about eight months into the fiscal year, it's devastating news for the anti-poverty organization.

"We'll have to shut down Head Start early," said Sullivan.

He said unless there is some other solution, Head Start will close in June, about two weeks early. The program serves 410 children in Greater Fall River and Taunton.

All 110 employees would be laid off. Sullivan said that even this solution will adversely affect CFC because it will have to pay higher rates when employees collect unemployment benefits.

"We're being squeezed by every aspect of government," said Sullivan.

But Sullivan said he isn't surprised. After being employed at CFC for 30 years, he said it gets worse every year. There's a constant increase in need and a lack of funding. The newest victims of poverty, according to Sullivan, are the elderly and children.

Currently, 62 percent of Greater Fall River CFC clients receiving fuel assistance are elderly. He said 34 percent of those eligible for the program have already exhausted their benefits, and it's only mid-January. CFC pays up to \$490 per family for heat during the winter season, which runs until April.

Feeding the hungry has also gotten more difficult. With a cupboard that is almost always bare shortly after being filled, CFC handed out more than 4,000 bags of groceries during the month of December.

"We're getting more and more people with less and less money," said Sullivan. "The tragedy of this is (most of) our new clients are elderly."

Sullivan condemned the way the government allocates funding and what it views as important. He laughed at the phrase "jobless recovery" when it is used to describe an economy that some say is getting better.

"How can you have a recovery when people have no jobs?" asked Sullivan, who is passionate about helping the, needy and angered by what he calls "double talk" and unfulfilled promises by government officials.

"A budget is the reflection of the morality of a society. It's getting kind of scary what we deem as important," said Sullivan.

With a one-third cut in discretionary spending by the federal government, Sullivan said that what is considered discretionary is what funds core services that help the poor and working poor stay warm and fed.

"Discretionary spending is what saves poor people from being destitute," said Sullivan.

The losses and cuts in core poverty programs, along with the increases in rent and prescription drugs, are just too much for many families to handle, according to Sullivan, who admits that he has no solution.

"The poor are falling in the cracks and they need a way out," said Sullivan. "I do wish people would start becoming concerned."

Sullivan has also seen a decline in charitable donations to CFC and other nonprofit organizations. He said the middle class is the societal section that has always donated the

most, but even it is feeling the pinch lately and giving less, if at all.

"Those are the people who used to take care of the poor. They're having a hard time taking care of themselves now," said Sullivan.

CONGRATULATING NORTHROP GRUMMAN'S LAKE CHARLES MANUFACTURING CENTER FOR RECEIVING THE 2003 LOUISIANA PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE AWARD

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 30, 2004

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working employees at Northrop Grumman's Lake Charles Manufacturing Center located in Southwest Louisiana. Recently the Louisiana Quality Foundation named the Lake Charles Manufacturing Center as the winner of its 2003 Louisiana Performance Excellence Award, the foundation's highest quality honor.

The Louisiana Performance Excellence Award is an annual recognition of Louisiana organizations that achieve high levels of performance excellence and excel in the application of outstanding quality principles. Organizations that serve as role models for quality, customers satisfaction and performance excellence are considered for this award.

This facility is a business unit of Northrop Grumman's Integrated Systems sector. This sector is a premier aerospace defense system integration enterprise. Integrated Systems designs, develops, produces, and supports network-enabled integration systems for government and civil customers worldwide. Most importantly, Integrated Systems helps fight the War on Terrorism by delivering the best value solutions, products and services that support our military missions in the areas of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, space access, battle management command and control, and integrated strike warfare.

I come to the floor of the House of Representatives today to personally commend and recognize the men and women of Lake Charles Manufacturing Center for this well-deserved award that acknowledges their level of talent and commitment to performance excellence. Louisiana has a talented workforce, and some of the most productive employees in the Nation. This Center truly exemplifies the solid work ethic for which Louisiana is known.

Again, congratulations to the employees of Northrop Grumman's Lake Charles Manufacturing Center for receiving this much deserved award.

REMEMBERING SEBASTIAN GARAFALO

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 30, 2004

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, when I first ran for Congress many people from across eastern Connecticut came forward to introduce me to their communities. One of those who was